



THE FIRST PERSPECTIVE

First Lutheran Church of Stephen, MN

January 2025 Newsletter



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CHURCH CONTACT INFO

Phone: 218-478-3895 | Email: firstl@wiktel.com | Mail: PO Box 72, Stephen, MN 56757
Web: www.flcstephen.com | Facebook: www.facebook.com/flcstephen

573 STEPHEN AVE IN STEPHEN

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Hours: 9 am–12 pm | Days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,

DARLENE BATES, SECRETARY

PASTOR'S CONTACT INFO

Phone: 218-230-6583 | Email: flcpastor@wiktel.com | Days: Sun–Thurs (off Fridays)

REV. JEFF BROWN, OLF

FROM OUR PASTOR

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”⁹ ...they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

~Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11

Epiphany blessings, First Lutheran Church! And, happy new year! May 2025 be a blessing for you and yours.

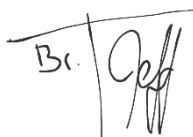
Epiphany is the season that follows Advent and Christmas. It’s a reflection of this passage in Matthew, where the wise men (sometimes referred to as “magi”) followed the star to find the child Jesus in Bethlehem. This did not happen immediately, and in fact, may have taken a couple years’ time! Notice what the wise men do – they follow the star, and they offer gifts.

We can do the same. As we enter this season, the same star is leading us – maybe not in the celestial sky – but in the “sky” of our soul. And when we discover that Jesus is already there, meeting us with love and grace, forgiveness and salvation, we can offer, in return, our hearts and lives.

*In this new season,
follow the star
of your life (Jesus)
and offer your
heart to God.*

Peace and everything good to you!

Your pastor,
Brother Jeff



CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

December 8, 2024

Members Present: Jeff Nelson, Melanie McGlynn, Kris Ann Pietruszewski, Debbie Benson, Betsy Jensen, Brian Hendricks, Sharon Kotts, Jeanne Hendricks, and Pat Heggen
Also in attendance: Darlene Bates and Pastor Jeff

President Jeff called the meeting to order.

Brian gave devotions.

Secretary's report: Melanie presented November's Secretary's Report (taken by Sharon). A motion was made by Pat to accept the November minutes, seconded by Kris Ann. All in favor, motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Darlene presented November's treasurer's report. Brian made a motion to accept November's treasurer's report. Melanie seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Offerings for November

November 3rd-\$3,057.51

November 10th-\$1,520.00

November 17th-\$2,830.78

November 24th-\$1,505.50

December 1st -\$3,164.00

Vanco for November-\$1,150.00

November Loose Change-\$1,255.00 People's Church

Membership changes: None

Committee reports

Deacons:

-Brother Jeff will be gone January 5th. We will be doing Lessons & Carols that Sunday.

Trustees:

-The parsonage was cooler than the thermostat read. Up North Plumbing replaced a fan on the furnace.

-Pat has called Thief River Glass again about the handicapped door button. They say they are coming, but haven't come yet.

Parish Education:

-The Christmas Program has been moved to December 15th at 5:00 PM.

Stewardship:

- Next Sunday, December 15th, Betsy will be available to help people with Thrivent Action Plans.

Pastor's Report:

-Brother Jeff finally had the Maria Lutheran meeting. For January & February, Brother Jeff and Tim Peterson will each take 2 Sundays. They will meet again the beginning of February to discuss what Lenten & Easter would look like. We will discuss this again at our February council meeting.

-Because of Lesson & Carols on January 5th, we will push communion to the 12th.

Old Business:

-We discussed adding a handrail to the lectern. The lectern would have to be secured down first, then a handrail could be added.

-For communion, the bread & wine will be filled in the back room and then set on the altar. The ushers no longer have to walk them up.

-We will address updating servant groups at the annual meeting. The kids will sing that Sunday. Melanie will talk to the congregation that Sunday to let people know what their duties would consist of. Hopefully we can get more people to sign up to help.

-Deanna has noticed that people at times are forgetting to flush the toilet. We will put up a sign reminding people.

-We are also ordering signs to put outside the church to let people know that we have cameras.

New Business:

-For our 2025 Loose Change, we will designate January as Love in Action. After that, the new council will take care of the rest of 2025. They will be getting more input from the congregation.

-Kathy has all our poinsettias already. The signup sheet goes until the 15th. Kathy will deliver on the 16th. If no one is available to water them, Brian & Jeanne will take care of watering when they are up here doing Altar Committee duties.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

The next meeting will be on January 5th at 10:30.

Melanie McGlynn, Church Council Secretary

CHURCH NOTES

PRE-FILLED COMMUNION CUPS are available for members who are unable to attend worship in-person. They are Grape juice and wafers in single serving disposable cups. Please contact the church office to pick up a supply.

MARTHA/RUTH CIRCLE will begin meeting again in March 2025. All women are welcome to join us for Bible Studies. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

LOOSE CHANGE Loose Change Sunday is the 3rd Sunday of each month. January's Loose Change is for Love in Action.

FOOD SHELF & PEOPLES CHURCH
Donations are always needed!



Did we make this big
enough to notice? 😊

MARK YOUR JANUARY CALENDAR!

**2024 ANNUAL MEETING
will be after worship
on January 26th**

MEMORIALS

In Memory of

Peggy Jo Carl Ziemer
Dorothy Woinarowicz

Linda Donarski

Given by

Marilee Marty
Ellen Anton
Mike & Cheri Douglas
John & Shawna Peterson
Robert & Dianne Dammann
Cliff & Jean Nyland
Mike & Cheri Douglas
Tim & Darlene Bates
Mark & Beth Kroulik
Nancy Gajeski
Bruce & Aase Hammes
Tim & Jody Paulson
Ellen Anton
Penny Jensen
Brian & Jean Hendricks

Fund

Technology
Technology
Undesignated
Technology
Technology
Undesignated
Education
Technology
Technology
Undesignated
Technology
Technology
Technology
Technology
Quilters
Undesignated

CHURCH FINANCIALS UPDATE

Weekly Sunday offerings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Plate</u>	<u>Electronic</u>	<u>Loose Change</u>
Dec 1	\$3,164.00	\$305.00	
Dec 8	\$2,732.00	\$105.00	
Dec 15	\$5,198.00	\$230.00	\$77.31
Dec 22	\$4,369.40	\$155.00	

Current balances of Funds available for donations:

Technology Fund	\$-14,515.11
Schendel Family Fund	\$9,798.25
Undesignated	\$10.00
Altar Fund	\$250.00
Education Fund	\$805.00

2024 BUDGET:

\$162,752.95


CURRENTLY

BEHIND:

\$18,143.00

JANUARY CALENDAR

Also available on the church website: www.flcstephen.com. Click on the Calendar tab.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUES	WEDNESDAY	THURS	FRIDAY	SAT
			1 <i>Happy New Year!</i>	2	3 Pastor's sabbath	4
5 9 am Lessons & Carols Worship Service 10:30 am Council	6 <i>Epiphany Day</i> 	7	8 6 pm Wednesday School NO CONFIRMATION	9	10 Pastor's sabbath	11
12 9 am Worship w/Holy Communion	13 Quilting	14	15 12 pm Wednesday Prayer (Fb) 6 pm Wednesday School 6:30 pm 7th Grade Confirmation 7:30 pm 9th Grade Confirmation	16	17 Pastor's sabbath	18
19 9 am Worship w/Holy Communion	20	21	22 12 pm Wednesday Prayer (Fb) 5 pm Bible Study 6 pm Wednesday School 6:30 pm 8th Grade Confirmation	23	24 Pastor's sabbath	25
26 9 am Worship <i>Annual Meeting</i>	27 Quilting	28	29 12 pm Wednesday Prayer (Fb) 6 pm Wednesday School 6:30 pm 7th Grade Confirmation 7:30 pm 9th Grade Confirmation	30	31 Pastor's sabbath	

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

1/01 Lowell Bring
 1/01 KariJo O'Keefe
 1/03 Gale Frei
 1/04 Bruce Field
 1/05 Gayle Field
 1/05 Kyler Szczepanski
 1/08 William McGlynn
 1/12 Jenn Kalhammer

ANNIVERSARIES

1/02 Dan & Kelsi Douglas

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Stephen, MN 56757

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